

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 232118Z JUL 76

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8404

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 2998

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, KS, KN

SUBJECT: KOREA AT 31ST GA: USUN-ROKUN DISCUSSION 23 JULY

REF: SEOUL 5652

1. SUMMARY. AT AMBASSADOR MOON'S REQUEST, AMBASSADOR SHERER AND MISOFF CALLED ON MOON 23 JULY. THE DISCUSSION CONCERNED SUCH MATTERS AS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DEFERMENT OPTION AND THE QUESTION OF PRIORITY, AND MARKED KOREAN DISTASTE FOR THE AMENDMENT OPTION. WE RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO MOON'S REQUEST THAT UKUN AND ROKUN SEEK TO DEVELOP SHARED APPROACHES AND APPRAISALS PRIOR TO CORE GROUP DISCUSSIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. DETAILS. AMBASSADOR MOON ASKED THAT THIS DISCUSSION BE CONSIDERED ENTIRELY PERSONAL AND INFORMAL. HE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE SHOULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD TO BE REFLECTING DECIDED ROK VIEWS.

3. MOON THOUGHT THAT, WITH THE SECRETARY'S SEATTLE ADDRESS, FM PARK'S SUPPORTING STATEMENT AND THE ROUND OF PRE-COLOMBO DIPLOMATIC APPROACHES, WE ARE NOW ENTERING A "SECOND STAGE" OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE 31ST GA. AMONG THE QUESTIONS OUR TWO MISSIONS COULD USEFULLY DISCUSS ARE (A) WHEN AND HOW TO PRESENT OUR CASE TO THE GA, (B) WHEN WE ENVISAGE THE KOREAN DEBATE, AND (C) THE POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING DEFERMENT OF THE DEBATE. THE CORE GROUP HAD DONE USEFUL WORK AND IT SHOULD
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CONTINUE BY ADDRESSING THE QUESTION OF PRIORITY. INDEED, WE

SHOULD ENCOURAGE CORE GROUP MEMBERS TO STATE THEIR INDIVIDUAL EVALUATIONS OF PRIORITY AND ITS POTENTIAL ADVANTAGES. BUT HE WANTED TO SUGGEST THAT ROKUN AND USUN SHOULD SEEK TO CONSULT IN ADVANCE OF CORE GROUP MEETINGS WHENEVER DIFFERENCES IN OUR VIEWS OR NUANCES OF POSITION MIGHT APPEAR TO ARISE. WAS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US ON THE ISSUES OF PRIORITY AND IN EVALUATING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE HOSTILE SIDE MIGHT MOVE FORWARD WITH A RESOLUTION BEFORE THE COLOMBO SUMMIT?

3. SHERER SAID THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN VERY RELUCTANT TO SPECULATE WHETHER NORTH KOREA MIGHT PROMPT ITS FRIENDS TO TABLE A TEXT BEFORE THE SUMMIT. LOGIC WOULD DICTATE THEY NOT DO SO, NOR DO WE HAVE INTELLIGENCE THAT THEY ARE PREPARING TO MOVE AT THIS TIME; NEVERTHELESS SUCH A MOVE OBVIOUSLY CANNOT BE RULED OUT. THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS THE CORE GROUP A GOOD PLACE TO DISCUSS THE PRIORITY QUESTION IN DEPTH. HE NOTED THAT THE GROUP INTENDS TO TAKE THIS UP AT ITS NEXT MEETING ON 29 JULY. HE ALSO NOTED PRIME MINISTER KIM'S REMARK TO AMB. SNEIDER THAT OUR SIDE MIGHT TABLE A RESOLUTION NOW WHILE INCLUDING AN EXPLANATORY NOTE STATING OUR READINESS TO WITHDRAW IF THE OTHER SIDE DOES NOT INSIST ON A DEBATE AT THE ASSEMBLY. MOON SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF THE CONVERSATION AND COULD NOT SAY WHETHER THIS CONSTITUTED ROK POLICY OR WAS BY WAY OF A PERSONAL IDEA. HE LATER SAID HE COULD IMAGINE THAT EVEN IF OUR SIDE OPTED FOR PRIORITY, WE NEED NOT BE BLAMED FOR HAVING INITIATED A CONFRONTATIONAL DEBATE AT THE GA. THE MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR HAD TOLD MOON THAT IN A CONVERSATION WITH WALDHEIM, THE SYG HAD SUPPORTED DEFERMENT BUT ADDED THAT THERE IS A WIDESPREAD EXPECTATION THE NORTH WILL INSIST ON A DEBATE.

4. MOON SAID HE HAS BEGUN A ROUND OF TALKS WITH THE CORE GROUP AMBASSADORS. UK AMB. RICHARD TOLD HIM THE UK DOES NOT BELIEVE A HOSTILE ITEM WILL BE TABLED PRIOR TO COLOMBO. MOON COMMENTED THAT WERE OTHER CORE GROUP AMBASSADORS TO SHARE THIS APPRAISAL, WE WOULD HAVE MORE TIME TO CONSIDER THE VARIOUS MATTERS BEFORE IT. HE SAID ROKUN BELIEVES IT HAS PERCEIVED A SLIGHT SHIFT IN THE DIMINUTION OF THE IMPORTANCE ATTRIBUTED BY THE US TO PRIORITY. SHERER RECALLED WE HAD THOUGHT PRIORITY IMPORTANT LAST YEAR IN ENSURING ADOPTION OF OUR RESOLUTION, AND IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE ROK CONTINUES TO CONSIDER PRIORITY TO BE VERY IMPORTANT. MOON SAID THAT THE OPTIMUM RESULT WOULD BE DEFERMENT BUT IF THIS PROVED NOT POSSIBLE, THEN ROK WOULD CONSIDER PRIORITY AS HAVING GREAT ADVANTAGES. MISOFF RECALLED THAT IN MARCH THE AMBASSADORIAL MEETING OF THE CORE GROUP HAD ASKED THE GROUP TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY AS ONE OF THE MAJOR OPTIONS THE POSSIBILITY OF SEEKING AMENDMENTS TO THE HOSTILE RESOLUTION (RATHER THAN TABLING A COMPETING FRIENDLY

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TEXT). THE GROUP HAD NOT YET DONE SO AND A DECISION TO GO FOR PRIORITY WOULD EXCLUDE THAT OPTION. A NUMBER OF CORE GROUP MEMBERS WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS THE AMENDMENT OPTION. MOON REPLIED THAT THE AMENDMENT OPTION SEEMED UNATTRACTIVE; SPEAKING PERSONALLY BUT REFLECTING TRENDS IN ROK THINKING, HE SAID THE ROK DISLIKES AMENDING A COMMUNIST PAPER PUT FORWARD BY THE NORTH.

5. MOON THOUGHT THAT THE CORE GROUP SHOULD NOT HAVE A PROLONGED DISCUSSION OF THE FAMILIAR QUESTION OF PRIORITY. RATHER, IT SHOULD SPEEDILY DRAW UP A BALANCE SHEET OF THE ADVANTAGES OF PRIORITY AND REACH A CONSENSUS OF IT. HE OPINED THAT IF THE US AND ROK WERE IN AGREEMENT, THE CORE GROUP WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING OUR APPRAISAL.

6. MOON ASKED WHETHER THE US INTEREST IN DEFERMENT HAS GROWN STRONGER. SHERER REPLIED THAT DEFERMENT WAS PLAINLY A PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH AND OUR FOLLOWING DIPLOMATIC CAMPAIGN. IT WAS DIFFICULT AT FIRST GLANCE TO FIND A WAY FOR OUR SIDE TO TABLE A RESOLUTION AT THIS STAGE WITHOUT DESTROYING WHATEVER POSSIBILITY FOR DEFERRAL MIGHT EXIST. SHERER AND MOON AGREED THAT AFTER COLOMBO WE WOULD BE ABLE TO ASSESS CLOSELY THE CHANCES OF DEFERMENT.

7. MOON COMMENTED THAT THE ROK MIGHT SUGGEST TO THE CORE GROUP AMENDMENTS TO THE CONTINGENCY RESOLUTION AND EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE.

8. THE MEETING CONCLUDED WITH A SHARED VIEW THAT THE DISCUSSION HAD BEEN HELPFUL AND THE EXPECTATION THAT FURTHER ROKUN-USUN TALKS IN PREPARATION FOR CORE GROUP DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE USEFUL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TERRITORIAL UNIFICATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976USUNN02998
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760284-0929
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760725/aaaaavwe.tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 SEOUL 5652
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2004 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KOREA AT 31ST GA: USUN-ROKUN DISCUSSION 23 JULY
TAGS: PFOR, KS, KN, US, UNGA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006